

CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

ONE DOLLAR PER ANNUM.

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL."—Paul.

[PAYABLE AT THE END OF SIX MONTHS.]

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No. 16.

EVANGELICAL.

SCRIPTURAL ILLUSTRATIONS.....No. IX.

PART V.

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. . . . And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.—Matt. xxv. 31—46.

WE shall conclude this illustration with the following retrospective and practical observations, which we hope will be carefully compared with the general subject to which they relate. If, on the whole, any useful light shall appear to have been thrown on the difficult and interesting portion of scripture, on which we have commented, we ask for no greater reward than to be considered the earnest defender of truth, and the sincere friend of man. We can conscientiously aver, that our object has been to follow the teachings of the wisdom from above. All observations that may, in the letter, savor of improper confidence or dictation, should be construed as expressing the real convictions and earnest opinion of the writer.

As we have treated the paragraph of scripture, as a parabolic representation of what was soon to take place, more liberty has been indulged in, expatiating on the characters mentioned, than would have been allowable in a case of mere historical relation. In parables and similes, symbolical and figurative style, there is not unfrequently much imagery & ornament, which does not admit of circumstantial application. Expositors who consider the passage as a clear and forcible description of transactions in the future state, exhibiting characters, infinitely different and distant from each other, must encounter insuperable difficulties. To mention nothing else; if those who have been neglected to be merciful and liberal, are to be eternally tormented in fire, what should be the just portion of such, as have added cruelty and oppression to negligence, rioting in bloodshed and inhumanity? Would not the former be *saints*, compared with the latter? And yet to make such a distinction of characters among the wicked, refutes the notion of its being an historical account of the supposed day of judgment.

Many arguments have been omitted, which have been employed, and frequently published, by the advocates for Universal salvation; not, however, because they were considered unimportant, but to render this illustration the more brief, and for the most part, original. Much more might have been said, on the words rendered "everlasting punishment." But not to fill our columns with Greek words and phrases, which, many of our patrons would not understand, we prefer recommending the inquisitive reader, to the able criticisms of *Chauncey, Winchester, Foster*, and many others of later date.

The reason which we shall assign for having limited the denounced punishment to the present state of existence, is, that in the discourse to the disciples, in which the text before us is included, the divine Teacher frequently appealed to previous exhibitions of like severity, but which could bear no comparison with a future state of endless torture. Though Jesus mentioned *wars, earthquakes, famines, pestilences*, 'great tribulation,' 'the desolation spoken of by Daniel,' 'the days of Noah,' and even 'the day when Lot went out of Sodom, and it rained fire from heaven,' adding with heart-appalling emphasis, "even so shall the coming of the Son of man be," he said not a word about the sufferings of those people beyond the present life. Therefore, whatever may be the fact, concerning their future condition for the time being, as the Saviour did not employ it, in the consideration of the punishment which he denounced, neither do we consider it important in this illustration. If the fact of the misery, of the old world or the Sodomites, for a certain time in the

future state, could have been urged to better effect and been made a better example of terror, than the destructions to which Jesus alluded, he would not have failed to seize that circumstance in preference to the others. But as he entirely omitted it, the reader may be satisfied, though we studiously follow his example. Although Jesus announced the consummation of the Levitical priesthood and the introduction and establishment of the Christian dispensation, he would not be understood that the difference between sin and holiness, would cease, or that wicked men would not be punishable for crimes, in the ages then to come. But that those *ages*, or *ages of ages*, referred to a future state of existence, is by no means evident.

As we have sufficiently demonstrated that the parable does not assert or support the doctrine of endless misery, we can safely infer that it is reconcilable with the final happiness of all men. But since we have seen a part of Israel so blinded, as to be cast away, or cast out of the kingdom of heaven, judging themselves unworthy of eternal life, the reader may inquire, How is it possible for that blind and unbelieving part, to be saved, or again received to the merciful favor of God? Our reply shall be in the words of St. Paul, on the same subject. "I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that *blindness in part hath happened unto Israel*, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so *all Israel* shall be saved: As it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, that shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.—For as YE, (Gentiles) in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through THEIR (Jews) unbelief: even so have these (a part of Israel) not believed, that through your mercy, they (the unbelievers) might also be saved. For God hath concluded them ALL in unbelief, (at different times) that he might have mercy upon ALL, (in the dispensation of the fulness of times.) O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his COUNSELS, and his ways past finding out." "Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness?—For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but LIFE from the DEAD?"—Rom xi. 25—33. But after all which might be quoted on the subject, we frankly confess that were there no passages of scripture which asserted and taught the doctrine of an individual resurrection to future life and immortality, we should despair of seeing and realizing that glorious period, when 'sin shall be finished, death be swallowed up in victory, and God, WHO IS LOVE, be ALL IN ALL.'

We must not close these observations without introducing some practical suggestions, which the general subject naturally involves. Every reader should take a deep interest in the moral and religious import of the important passage, which we have attempted to explain. He should remember that the things which were written aforetime, are transmitted to us for our instruction, admonition, reproof, and edification in the truth. God continues a watchful eye over the regions of Christendom, and is now as faithful in dispensing rewards, corresponding with the characters and works of men, as he ever was in any former dispensation. "There are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God, which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal." The parable may be so improved, as to conduce as essentially to our reformation and happiness, as though we had been personally addressed by the Saviour. We should inquire solemnly at the altar of our hearts and the throne of conscience, whether we

have not done worse than to neglect the naked, hungry, destitute, and, even imprisoned sons of misfortune. O, dreadful to relate! how many are there now on the earth, whose lips are vocal in professions of religion, who are proud to be denominated the followers of a merciful and forgiving Lord, and yet they exercise neither pity nor humanity; but having craftily ensnared their debtor, rush forth and seize him by the throat, vociferating, Thou miserable wretch! pay me what thou owest! How many have been the disheartened and ruined victims to avarice? How many have been inhumanly imprisoned to gratify the revengeful spirit of high-toned professors of religion? But alas! shall those who dare adjudge others to endless burnings, escape the righteous judgment of God, while they riot in crimes that would stain the moral character of those on the left hand? Remember, kind reader, of whatever persuasion, that God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that also shall he reap. Those who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honor and immortality, shall have, as a reward, eternal life; but those who are contentious, and obey not the truth, have tribulation and anguish. See, then, that ye put not afar off the evil day, as though 'judgment would for a long time linger, and 'damnation slumber,' for "BEHOLD, the JUDGE STAND-ETH AT THE DOOR!"

FOR THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

"But where are the nine?"—Luke xvii. 17.

The above quotation was uttered by the great and good Teacher, who was sent from God as "the way, the truth and the life;" and it is expressive of the mild and benignant spirit by which he was actuated in his labors of love, for the welfare of man. As it was the first and principal concern of the Saviour of the world to contribute to the happiness of those for whom he "tasted death," we behold him manifesting at all times those immortal principles of general benevolence, which the gospel of eternal life so forcibly enjoins. Nor is it possible for the disciples of Christ to contribute more essentially to the happiness of their fellow-men, than by exercising the spirit of philanthropy, that it may flow out in chrysal streams of real beneficence. Thus may the sons of celestial birth entwine their heads with imperishable garlands of amaranth, by imitating the example of Him, whose name is encircled with the halo of immortal honors.

The interrogation heading this article was elicited under peculiar circumstances. The great Physician had previously healed a number, afflicted with various maladies. And what might we rationally expect their conduct would have been towards the holy Jesus, whose potent but merciful voice rebuked their disorders, and restored them to the enjoyment of health? Could they refrain returning to their Restorer, that with grateful hearts and elevated voices they might chant to his fame the anthem of glory? But alas! *one only*, of the *ten*, was mindful of his duty. A Samaritan returned and fell down and glorified God.

From the words of Jesus, "where are the nine?" we learn that gratitude is one of the first duties enjoined upon man. Reader, are we under less obligations of gratitude to God, than were the ten, who were cleansed by the word of Jesus? Have we not all an interest in the sanctifying blood of Jesus, "who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time," and by which, we alone, can be cleansed from moral pollution? If so, we must consider ourselves under the highest obligations to praise and adore that love and goodness, which is designed in the welcome "dispensation of the fulness of times," to raise us from the possession of mental disease and darkness, to the empyrean realms above. And while we contemplate upon the riches of redeeming grace, and feel the urgent reasons for making daily returns of gratitude, let adoration and praise, contin-

nally ascend in a sacred flame from the grateful altar of our hearts, like burning incense, acceptable in the sight of God. And let us constantly remember the daily bounties from the munificent hand of our common Father in heaven; and may gratitude at all times arise, before the Throne of the august Sovereign of the Universe. L. B.

DOCTRINAL.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

SKETCH PREACHER, NO. 3.

Heb. xii. 17—*For ye know that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.*

From several considerations, this portion of the sacred word, is highly interesting and deserves a direct and impartial examination. We shall however, in this sketch, mention two only.

I. The practical instruction which the transactions alluded to, are calculated to afford.

II. The arbitrary and unreasonable use which limitarian divines have made of it.

These transactions are circumstantially detailed in the 25th and 27th chapters of Genesis. It would be useless to rehearse the particulars at length; but a brief review of the most prominent of them may assist us in correctly understanding the general subject. Esau came from the field fatigued with toil, and faint for the want of refreshment. Jacob, his younger brother, had just served up a very inviting and palatable food, and Esau eagerly approached him and said "Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage." The request was natural and reasonable, and it is truly surprising that it was not instantly, and even joyfully complied with. But Jacob very unnaturally refused to relieve the pressing wants of his famishing brother, unless in return he would resign to him the privileges of his birthright, as the first born of the family. Without sufficient deliberation, Esau complied with this unreasonable request, and confirmed the transfer by the sanction of an oath. This solemnity rendered it impossible for Esau ever to retrieve the privileges which he had rashly disposed of without a proper equivalent, because "an oath for confirmation was an end of all strife." On a subsequent occasion, Jacob took advantage of his father's infirmities, and by a subtle artifice, in which he was aided by the unnatural duplicity of his mother, succeeded in obtaining the formal pronouncement of the paternal benediction which belonged to the first born. When Esau heard the words of his father, in this solemn and moving service, the recollection of his former rights, his stupidity, and folly in rashly disposing of them, the cruel dissimulation of his unfeeling brother, his own needless humiliation, &c. rushed upon him with an irresistible force. "He cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry," and said, "Bless me, even me also, O my father. And he lifted up his voice and wept." The venerable patriarch, with all the affection and tenderness of a parent, replied, "Thy brother came with subtlety, and hath taken away thy blessing," meaning the blessing which belonged to him as the first born.

These are the circumstances to which the text alludes, and they fully explain its meaning. When Esau desired the blessing of the first born, he was rejected, not because he was an object of his father's displeasure, but because it had already been pronounced upon Jacob, and could not be reversed. "He found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears," that is, the regret and grief produced by the recollection of his folly and precipitation in disposing of his birth-right, availed him nothing, because if Jacob had used no duplicity with his father, he had himself rendered it absolutely irrecoverable by the solemnity of an oath. The inviolability of a solemn vow was universally acknowledged. The sanctity attached to an oath, though cruel and unjust in itself, and hastily made, is evident from that of Jephtha with respect to his daughter. Indeed Esau could not, if he reflected, have the least expectation of regaining the privileges which he had transferred to his brother. His earnest request was probably the effect of a momentary desperation, and his immoderate lamentations were produced by the hopeless recollection of his former imprudence. It is however, certain, as we may see by the history, that his inquietudes and griefs proceeded exclusively from secular considerations. He had not the most remote idea of having sacrificed any privilege to the favor and protection of God, or that he had subjected himself to any calamity or even inconvenience, in the future world. The vast concerns of eternity did not probably once occur to Esau, while "he carefully sought, and that with tears, a place of repentance."

I. It has been inferred from the disposal of his birth-right, that he effectually cut off all grounds for hope in the divine mercy and forgiveness, and irrevocably sealed his doom to endless condemnation and woe. In a word, that he sold his right to eternal salvation and glory. But these were no part of the birth-right under the Jewish economy. How could he then, by this act, dispose of them? Again, if this be true, and Esau was sensible of it, how shall we account for his reasoning so erroneously on the occasion? "Behold, says he, I am at the point to die, and what profit shall this birth-right do me?" If modern divinity be correct, this was the very moment at which he would reap the immense profit of it. It was the very pivot on which turned his immortal good. But from the law and the testimony, it is indubitably certain,

that whatever the temporal benefits of the birth-right might be, they would neither profit nor harm the possessor after death. 2. It is inferred that Esau's extreme grief arose from a consideration of his truly deplorable situation, being a reprobate and outcast from God, and forever excluded from all divine favors and blessings. Nothing but curses, despair and torments awaited him. But this is not true. For ought that appears, he could receive a blessing from his father, and numberless blessings from God, though he could not obtain the particular blessing of the first born. This was what grieved him so pungently. He had not lost the affectionate regards of his venerable parent, nor any title or privilege to the mercy or spiritual favors of his Maker. Isaac said to him, "Behold thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; and by thy sword shalt thou live." "By faith (in the future mercy of God,) Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come." 3. It is inferred that all men have a birth-right to eternal life. They have a day of grace in which they may secure the favor of God and the blessings of eternity, or foolishly squander them away by their disobedience. Now it is not our present object to disprove this proposition, but to show that if true, it can derive no support from the case of Esau. How long will man, to support a favorite hypothesis, "darken counsel by words without knowledge?" Had every child in a Jewish family a birth-right to the privileges of the first born? Surely not, unless each one were the eldest son. One, and one only, was born to the possession of this right, and therefore one only of each family could dispose of it. How then can we infer from this circumstance that every man is born with, and may lose his title to spiritual and everlasting blessings? The Terror of Europe, a few years since, lost the throne of France, but can we infer from this, that every individual in the nation may lose the crown? We certainly may with as much propriety as we can contend that every sinner may lose his right to the privileges of heaven, from the fact of Esau's having sold his birth-right, which had no relation at all to heavenly and eternal things. But how does this notion that every sinner has a day of grace, in which he may secure his immortal interest in Christ, and inherit the blessing of eternal life, agree with the standard of Calvinism? According to this, millions of sinners were "left out of the covenant of redemption," and were reprobated by an irreversible decree, from all eternity, to everlasting death, "for the praise of God's glorious justice." Have all these reprobates a birth-right to "an incorruptible crown that fadeth not away"? Do they all enjoy a day of grace, during which they may "make their calling and election sure," though they have never been either called or elected? When did they enjoy this day? Surely not since eternity began, for the decree of reprobation is coeval with eternity, and has all along effectually barred such a privilege from reprobates. It is therefore certain according to this scheme, that if ever they were in possession of such a favor, it was before the commencement of eternity.

It is difficult to see how the idea of losing the available privilege of repentance for sin, long before death, agrees better with the Armenian, than the Calvinistic system. According to this scheme, the moment of death closes the term of probation. Any time before this, every sinner may repent, obtain the pardon of his sins from God, and secure the blessings of eternal life. Now Esau lived and flourished many years after the resignation of his birth-right to Jacob, and if in this act, he finally lost the privilege of available repentance for sin, one part of this system is certainly false. It is not true that,

"While the lamp [of life] holds out to burn,
The vilest sinner may return."

But enough has been said to evince the arbitrary and erroneous use which has been made of this portion of scripture. Esau lost no endless privileges by this rashness, because no such were included in his birth-right. These were all temporal. 1. A double portion of his father's worldly substance. Deut. xxi. 17. 2. A right to the priestly office.—Num. iii. 13. 3. A right to special authority and government over the family.—Gen. xxvii. 29.

To one possessing the feelings and attachments of human nature, these distinguishing privileges were desirable. They carried with them an irresistible charm during life, but they lost all their value at the hour of death. It was the loss of these momentary distinctions which Esau lamented with fruitless tears. His calamity was wholly temporary, and his griefs proceeded exclusively from sublunary considerations. The circumstance however, affords much practical instruction. It teaches us to act with deliberation and caution in all the transactions of life. Not to be hasty and rash in our estimation of things, but to calculate with coolness the comparative value of every blessing and every privilege, which an indulgent and bountiful providence bestows upon us. The apostle very fitly uses it as the ground of an exhortation to Christians, to continue unwavering in the faith and practice of the Christian religion. Not to fail of exercising and perpetuating "the grace of God," in the distinguishing privileges of the everlasting gospel. By these they are elevated far above the Jews or Gentiles. His exhortation is of the same import of that to the Galatians, "Stand fast therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." In this country we are born to high and unparalleled privileges, both as men and as Christians. Let not the honors of the world, the charms of wealth, or the violence of unhallowed passions tear them from us. But have we wasted our substance, let us repent and turn to God, "for he will abundantly pardon." "Ask, and ye shall receive, seek, and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

FOR THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

A CONVERSATION

On future punishment, between Senex and Juvenis.

Senex. My young friend, since our views respecting the design of future punishment are widely different, it may be beneficial for us to examine the matter closely. Feeling an interest in your welfare, I think it proper to request you to state the proposition concerning this subject, which you laid down in a late conversation with me; in order that I may show you its inconsistency.

Juvenis. I feel grateful to you, my aged friend, for the concern which you manifest for my welfare; and feeling willing to be put aright, when out of the way, I state the proposition referred to, viz: Punishment is *finite*, because God cannot punish out of any other than one of these two motives: 1st. To reclaim the object punished. 2d. To prevent the commission of crime in others. Any other motive must be produced by a vindictive spirit, which God does not possess.

Senex. I would call your attention to the following case, to test your argument. A good father issues out to his children a good law, an eternal rule of right, an exemplification of the purity of the lawgiver, of course beneficial for his children to keep and obey. The father, as well he might, annexes a penalty to this law. Say for the breach of which, unconditionally, one year's imprisonment. Immediately one of the family violates the law, throws contempt on his father, and renders himself a proper subject for prison. Of course he is cast into it, as he must be, unless the father changes, proves false, prevaricates or repents. A short time after, all the remaining members of the family are removed by death. The good father is also informed that the one in prison is so hardened in sin, and such is his turpitude and obstinacy, that he is not to be reclaimed. Here your two motives for punishment have failed.

Juvenis. The simile which you mention is far from being applicable to the punishment of the wicked "in that world which is to come." Because, in the *first* place it supposes an utter impossibility in relation to immortal souls, inasmuch as it carries the idea that they can die or be annihilated. In the *second* place, it supposes that sinners may be incorrigible, and implies that the hardened obduracy of their hearts, *cannot* be overcome by God;—thus taking from his hand the sceptre of his power. Thus much it seems you have taken for granted, in order to destroy my proposition; and thus much you must prove to be true before I admit your simile to be applicable, or my proposition to be nullified and void.

Senex. But, Sir, as it may throw some light on the subject, I will give you my views of it. It is a granted axiom, that any moral being who knowingly violates a just law, incurs its penalty, and of course so long as he retains a disposition thus to violate, ought to endure it, however strongly he may be inclined to disobedience. I do not suppose the case would be altered, whether there were or were not others to deter.

Juvenis. As you have abandoned the simile which you first mentioned, I consider that by so doing you acknowledge it to be incorrect. But to examine your view of the subject—I agree with you, "that any moral being who knowingly violates a just law, incurs its penalty, and that he ought to endure it so long as he retains a disposition thus to violate;" but I contend that the penalty annexed to such law is in exact proportion to the evil intention of him who violates. But when punishment has produced its designed effect, and the sinner repents, a remission of his sins is granted him. With you, I do not suppose the case would be altered, whether there were or were not others to be deterred. Hence you will perceive that I think punishment a corrective principle—a wholesome discipline.

Senex. But I argue that the law being an eternal rule of right, a violation of it will eternally cast contempt upon its author. Now how can its penalty be abrogated, unless by rendering its author blind to the contempt cast upon him, or false to his own threatenings?

Juvenis. You argue that a violation of the law "will eternally cast contempt upon its author;" but

which I suppose you mean an *eternal contempt*, which I think all will admit cannot exist, after the being thus casting contempt, ceases to condemn; and this he will cease to do, when punishment has produced its designed effect.

Senex. But, my friend, is God bound to give the sinner repentance, to save him from deserved punishment? Why then is he not under the same obligation as a just and merciful Being, to admit no punishment at all for disobedience? Your view of the subject will forever exclude all misery by punishment, as certainly for a limited, as an unlimited period. Thus we see that your argument proves too much.

Juvenis. Your questions are certainly novel in their nature. Why did you not ask, 'Is God bound to punish men in order to make them repent?' And then put these questions to yourself. Have I a son? Has he transgressed a law which I gave him to obey? Does he still retain this disposition to transgress? Suppose these questions to have been answered in the affirmative, and then ask one more: 'Am I bound to apply the rod of correction, in order to reduce him to submission?' And what will be your answer? Let universal experience reply, and it will be, 'I am.' Have you reduced him under willing subjection? And will you then punish him more? If man would, I have reason to believe that God, who is abundant in goodness, pardoning iniquity and passing by transgression, will not do it. These remarks you will perceive, fully answer your question, in relation to the necessity of any punishment at all. But, as I am disposed to be fair, I will state your question in other words, to which you will not object. What necessity was there for the introduction of moral evil into the world? This I think is giving your question its full force. But giving it this latitude, I have the same reasons for its introduction that any denomination has; and one more, which I think far more weighty than them all, viz. that no scheme of redemption will redound so much to the declarative glory of God as this; and this scheme could not have been laid, unless moral evil had been introduced into the world.

Senex. But, my respected friend, your notion of punishment forever excludes the atonement, and makes it necessary for us to praise punishment, for our salvation. Nor can you get from this dilemma, unless you say, 'punishment is only a means of our subjection and salvation,' which we know would be insufficient without the co-operation of the Holy Spirit.

Juvenis. Now then, for your sweeping dilemma into which, in your opinion, I am cast. Here your own foresight has suggested, that praise is not to be attached to the *instruments* or means by which we are humbled and saved, but must be rendered to HIM who employs them. Here then let me suppose a case, exactly parallel with that of punishment and its effect. All men are by nature in a state of moral blindness. Impenitence has darkened their eyes, by spreading over them the film of unbelief. Now this film must be removed, in order to their becoming penitent and believing. Punishment is the lancet by which it is to be removed in obstinate cases. Our Saviour is the surgeon who is to perform the operation. He attempts it and succeeds. Now, Sir, would you attach the praise to the lancet or the surgeon? Thus you will perceive that the obstacle thrown in my way, is fairly surmounted, and the saying of the Lord fully verified. "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; and I will lead them in paths that they have not known. I will make darkness light, before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them and not forsake them."

Senex. I think we had better drop the subject, and take the Scriptures for our guide.
W—p, Nov. 22, 1823.

DR. FRANKLIN.

When Dr. Franklin had approached to the very close of his life, he reasoned thus coolly with a friend: "Death is as necessary to the constitution, as sleep; we shall rise refreshed in the morning. The course of nature must soon put a period to my present mode of existence. This I shall submit to with less regret, as, having seen, during a long life, a good deal of

this world, I feel a growing curiosity to become acquainted with some other, and can cheerfully, with filial confidence, resign my spirit to the conduct of that great and good Parent of mankind who created it, and who has so graciously protected and preserved me from my birth to the present hour.

CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

PORTLAND, SATURDAY, DEC. 20, 1823.

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL."

"REMEMBER THE POOR."

It will be gratifying to the friends of the suffering poor, to learn that means are devised and Societies instituted for the amelioration of their condition, in addition to the liberal and merciful provisions usually made by our public guardians.—There may be some, however, who may entertain unfavorable views of Charitable Associations, on account of the frequent misappropriation of their funds, and the ostentation which sometimes accompanies those deeds, that should be performed with the greatest *humility*; "not knowing what evil may come upon the earth," or how soon the liberal *almshouses*, may need the *alms* of others. Indeed it may be a serious question with many, whether there is not, on the whole, a diminution of charitable conferments, in those vicinities where such societies are organized, and announced to the public.—As less attention is paid to the destitute and poor, by individuals generally, than would be, if they had no legal retreat, or asylum, to which they might seasonably repair, it is thought that institutions devoted to singular munificence, would have a similar effect, and increase individual apathy, to the detriment of those, whose conditions should hold a conspicuous place in our affections and sympathies. The question, it is true, admits of plausible arguments on both sides. *But it is too late in the season, for theory and discussion.* We should take it for granted that no general and invariable rule, for liberal distributions, can be adopted. Men are so differently constituted that, what would gratify the benevolent feelings of one, might be equally unpleasant to another. In some cases, perhaps, little would be done without considerable form and parade; while others, equally as munificent, would shrink from any thing like ostentation, and communicate their favors through secret and unseen channels. Possessing such different temperaments, how pleasant it is, that every generous disposition may be gratified, and receive a corresponding reward. But suffer us to exhort you, charitable reader, that you cautiously avoid two errors, to which many are exposed. *First*, do not pause to theorize concerning the most proper method of being charitable, till the poor, storm-beaten sufferer falls to the north or the south, there to be, till he awakes in the resurrection morn; and, *secondly*, never neglect individual munificence, with the pretence, that Charitable Associations are *obligated* to grant relief. Either bestow with cheerfulness, or unite yourself with such a Society, that you may be *also obligated*, to perform a reasonable duty.

It is neither avarice nor present necessity that dictates these remarks. Comfortably situated in our homely dwelling, we are constrained to *remember others*.

Even while we write, the boisterous and protracted storm awakens in the heart, a thousand tender anxieties. The tempestuous atmosphere is thick with snow, and with it, the winds are raising hillocks of unusual height. The agitated and restless billows of the ocean, break upon the rocky shore, with noise and violence. The pitiful condition of many, exposed to the untimely inclemencies of winter, rushes upon the mind, and their sad complaints, and groans, and sufferings seem to be echoed and re-echoed by the deep and varying murmurs of the storm. Who knows but that this may be the dread moment, when many a tempest-tost son of the ocean, may strike on some fatal rock—be driven upon the threatening beach, or sink beneath a mountain-wave? Some may be dashed to atoms in a moment—others may languish for days or weeks and perish at last, while not a few are turned *topsy-turvy* and drink a sudden death in the briny deep.

The Omniscient only knows, how many heart-rent, agonizing females, who may be now perambulating their comfortless habitations, as though traversing the wave-beaten shore, to descry the approach of their kindest friends, may be de-

prived of them, and of their earthly support and joy, before another sun shall rise; how many helpless, unprotected children may be left fatherless and destitute; or, how many parents, aged, infirm and dependent on filial kindness, may this night, bury, in a watery grave, the sons on whom they had leaned, as upon a staff of life. Or even, if their precious *lives* are preserved, their earthly substance may be committed to the deep, and lost irrevocably. And these are but solitary instances of human suffering.

Our motives are neither mercenary nor selfish, in desiring to utter the language of distress; in sounding abroad the mariner's dying prayers in behalf of his wife and little ones. With the tremulous voice of age and the suppliant look of helpless infancy, we beg you—to *remember the poor*.

May those, whose habitations and substance have been hurried to destruction on wings of fire, and all, who by sickness or misfortune have been reduced to want, be remembered by charitable individuals and Associations. And that He who controls the elements as the servants of his pleasure, would be pleased to preserve the lives and property of our friends, is the earnest prayer, of the FRIEND OF ALL MEN.

A THOUGHT OR TWO:

A Parody on an article extracted into the *Mirror* of the 23d of November, from the *Relig. Intelligencer*.

If David suffered the pains of hell for his sins in this world, and was afterwards saved by repentance and reformation, I should like to know if this would not be being saved without Christ, as much as though the same thing had have taken place in a future state? In what respect would Christ save him, in one case more than in the other? Since it would be going up by the *same way*, viz. repentance and reformation, why would it be Christ in this world, and *theft and robbery* in the next?

Some contend for endless punishment because they think it is no greater than our crimes merit. Let me ask such, if *infants*, *idiots*, and *deaf and dumb* people would have been punished eternally had no Saviour been provided? If they would, then, on that principle, they would have suffered unjustly, as they are incapable of sinning against a Being of whom they can have no knowledge. But if those people would not be exposed to endless misery for sins, how can the Saviour benefit them, as he does the rest of the saved? And why could he not be the Saviour of all others, though they were never so exposed, as well as of *infants* and *idiots*? And further, was it not cruelty in the Deity to preserve the lives of those, who, he knew, would reject the Saviour, if they lived to maturity and be miserable forever, whereas, they would neither have deserved nor suffered such misery, had they been taken away in their infancy?

MARRIED.

In this town, by Elder Rand, Mr. William Harris, of Fryeburg, to Miss Sapphira Williams, of Portland.

By Rev. Mr. Streeter, Mr. Ebenezer H. Smith, to Miss Mary S. Lord—Mr. Charles D. Smith, to Miss Hannah G. Mangg.

DIED.

In this town, Dec. 3, Mrs. Mary Raynes—Dec. 7, Caroline Augusta, youngest child of Mr. John Cox—Miss Nancy, daughter of Capt. Freeman Smith—Miss Mary, daughter of Benjamin Dodge, 3d—Dec. 14, wife of Mr. Peter Merrill.

On the 5th inst. Capt. JAMES FARMER, aged 43. He had resided in this town about 22 years, 11 of which he had been an active and enterprising Merchant, pursuing that vocation with an industry, ability and attention, that has seldom been surpassed; and it may with confidence be said, that he was a man of the strictest honor, and sterling integrity; discharging all his obligations to others, with a promptness that has rarely been exceeded. To his family, he was always attentive, making ample provision for their support. He possessed a generous feeling of heart, and a comity of manners, that was always pleasing to every person, who had any acquaintance with him. To his friends, he was ever pleasant, easy and communicative; and when munificence was asked of him, to relieve the distressed and unfortunate, his heart and his hand were always open to administer to their relief. He was endued with a strong and penetrating mind, that discarded even the semblance of superstition and bigotry; he looked with an intellectual eye, through the works of nature, up to the great Author of all things, in whom he had the most unwavering confidence, that the future happiness of every human being, was his design, in giving man an existence; and declaring, when in the struggles of death, that he died in the full belief of the universal goodness of God through the mediation of Christ, and the future salvation of all the family of man. In his last moments, he possessed an almost unexampled fortitude and presence of mind, apparently counting the moments with composure, as they were wafting him from this, to a future state of existence.—*Eastern Argus*.

At Palmyra, Portage County, (Ohio,) on the 5th November, the Rev. TIMOTHY BIGELOW, an able, faithful and useful preacher of Universal Grace and Salvation. His worthy consort died on the 11th of October preceding. Br. Bigelow and his wife were both believers in the same glorious doctrine—and they departed this life, in the triumphs of faith, confirming, with their dying breath, the truth which they had long professed.

POETRY.

CHRISTMAS HYMN.

JEHOVAH spake and Gabriel sped,
Upborne on wings of light;
Celestial glory round him spread,
And chang'd to day, the night.

Swift down to earth the Herald flew,
From God's eternal throne;
His shining robe of rainbow hue,
The stars, moon, sun, outshone.

The voice of Love was heard on high
Loud anthems roll'd around;
Ten thousand angels left the sky,
To chant salvation's sound.

Shout, shout for joy; rejoice, O earth!
Hail, hail auspicious morn!
Rejoice, rejoice, at Jesus' birth,
In him are nations born.

From Zion's hill to worlds above,
Re-echoed back the strain;
And golden harps attun'd to love,
Thus swept Ephratah's plain;

He comes! the mighty Saviour comes!
Good will, peace, joy prevail;
Glad tidings shout; prepare him room:
Hail! glorious Saviour! hail!

Wide o'er the world thy sceptre sway,
Till NATIONS prostrate fall;
Kings, princes, men, thy law obey,
And crown thee Lord of ALL.

MISCELLANEOUS.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

CHRISTIAN OPITULATOR.

No. XIII.

Any person, who has observed with attention the movements of religious systems, for a few years past, must have derived a reason for much present satisfaction, and a gratifying hope for the future. So true is the maxim, "That in religion, as in any other subject, truth, if left to itself, will always obtain the ascendancy," that we can, already see, in a good measure, the truth of it demonstrated by experience. I have often admired the sentiment of Paley, expressed in his moral philosophy: "That if different religions be professed, in the same country, and the minds of men remain unfettered and unawed by intimidations of law, that religion, which is founded in maxims of *reason* and *credibility*, will gradually gain over the other to it. I do not mean that men will *formally* renounce their ancient religion, but that they will adopt into it the more *rational* doctrines, the *improvements* and *discoveries* of the neighboring sect; by which means, the worse religion, without the *ceremony* of a *reformation*, will insensibly assimilate itself to the better. If popery, for instance, and protestanism were permitted to dwell quietly together, papists might not become protestants, (*for the name is commonly the last thing changed*) but they would become more enlightened and informed; they would, by little and little, incorporate into their creed many of the tenets of protestantism, as well as imbibe a proportion of its spirit and moderation." The truth of this sentiment, we have seen proved, in some good degree, in our own country: And to show some instances in support of it, will be our object at this time.

There has evidently been a considerable alteration of religious principles within a few years; and that too, without an attendant change of names. The peculiar names of different sects, it is true, still continue; but public opinion has certainly become much more liberal than formerly. For instance: What is called *Calvinism*, now, would have been discountenanced by our forefathers, and condemned by the early reformers. And the remark of the venerable "NAZARENUS," may be introduced here, with peculiar force:—That if modern orthodoxy be Calvinism, Calvin himself was not a Calvinist. Any one, who will look into the records of the early Calvinistic religion, and read the sermons formerly preached by the ministers of that sentiment, and compare them with modern doctrines and discourses, cannot avoid acknowledging that, Calvinism has gradually

adopted some of the more rational doctrines, the improvements and discoveries of neighboring sects; and become quite a different religion, from what it formerly was. It is true, the believers in that system have not changed the original name, and probably will not soon change it; though I have lately heard some of the preachers and others profess a desire to drop the term *Calvinist* altogether, and assume that of *Predestinarian*. Should this disposition become general, an end would, perhaps, come to ancient Calvinism; for "the name," says Paley, "is the last thing changed," and this is about the only thing remaining to be done. That religion has so silently put off former errors, and so imperceptibly profited from others, that we can say with that excellent divine, Doct. Channing, of Boston, who, as I believe, was the author of the idea,—Could the stern reformer of Geneva raise his head from the dust in which it now slumbers, and hear the mitigated tone, in which his *professed followers* attempt to set forth his doctrines, we fear that he could not lie down again in peace, until he had poured upon them, some of those maledictions, which he once pronounced upon Michael Servetus.

Almost every sect among us, has already derived some acquisitions from the improvements and discoveries of its religious neighbors; and all seem to be in the road of amendment. It is but a few years since, (suffer me to speak plainly,) the Baptists, in this and the adjacent States, were strenuously opposed to college and theological educations, for qualifying their ministers as "teachers in Israel." Now, a different idea seems to be general among them. What they once condemned, they now approve of and encourage. They begin to be patrons of science, and acknowledge the propriety and utility, if not the necessity of a learned ministry. "Preaching by note" was utterly condemned, as precluding all originality, force and sincerity;—now, there are a number of their ministers, who practice it; and, as I am informed, it is urgently recommended to the theological students, in their institution at Waterville.

Their peculiarity also in respect of a close communion, seems to me to be gradually becoming unpopular among them. While many, and perhaps the most of them sincerely wish to commune with others, some unreservedly contend for the validity of open communion.

The Methodist ministry has generally been distinguished for their want of "human learning;"—for their intemperate zeal and vociferous declamation; but, of late, there seems to be some dispositions of improvement among that class of christians also. Their meetings of religious worship, are not so much scenes of confusion as formerly;—their preachers are more temperate in zeal and instruction in their addresses. They also seem to be on the improving order.

In short, most if not all denominations among us, have gradually lopped off some of their exposed errors, and incorporated into their religion more rational doctrines. This augurs much, in favor of the future. May this silent and almost imperceptible progress continue, until all shall be convinced that true christianity does not so much consist in speculative theology, as in the exercise of moderation, forbearance, hospitality, and universal charity.

ORIGEN.

FROM THE "PLAIN TRUTH."

ONE MORE NEW PLAN!—A friend of ours residing in New York, (who is ready to prove what he asserts) recently gave us the following statement:—

"At a meeting of several Presbyterian preachers at Andover, Mass. some year, or perhaps more, since, it was resolved by them all, that whenever any one of the company chanced to hear of the 'dangerous sickness' of a rich man, he should immediately repair to his bed side, and solicit a part or all of his earthly possessions for the cause of missions!"

If the annals of popery can furnish a more outrageous and infamous transaction than this, of this kind, we are sadly mistaken. Disturb a dying man, in his last moments, by begging, or scaring him into a measure that has for its object the possession of the property he has earned! Reader, if you have a parent, think what your feelings would be, if when dying he were thus barbarously treated.

SALARY OFFICERS—\$2000 A YEAR!—The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions have provided a snug birth, and a handsome salary for J. EVARTS, Esq. their Corresponding Secretary. Here is an extract from the proceedings of the annual meeting:—

"The committee recommended that the sum of ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS be granted to Jeremiah Evarts, Esq. as Corresponding Secretary of the Board; and that the further sum of ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS be allowed to him as Editor of the Missionary Herald. * * * * This report was accepted."

Two thousand dollars a year exceed in amount the salary of either Governor in five of the eastern States. Rhode-Island and Connecticut contained in 1820, 358,000 inhabitants—yet the annual salary of secretary Evarts far surpasses the united salaries of the governors of these two States. The governors of New Hampshire and Vermont, have each an annual salary of \$1000—Secretary Evarts has \$2000 per annum. What can be the arduous duties of his office? He is allowed \$1000 a year for editing the Missionary Herald, a work which has more buyers than readers. It is nearly destitute of original matter—and requires no more talent to conduct it than to turn a grindstone. But the orthodox committee give their reasons. Let them speak for themselves.

"The principal reasons were, in brief, that the Corresponding Secretary should, in order to the uninterrupted discharge of the duties of his office, be free from care and anxiety as to providing the means of support for his family; and that the sum specified is no more than a suitable support."

Many of our honest farmers in the country look upon \$2000 as a great estate. Who, that has a family, is free from care and anxiety? Our credulous contributors have hitherto supposed that the avails of their toil and sweat went to aid in the conversion of British Hindosts—and not to fatten Boston Bond street loungers.—*ibid.*

A REVEREND GAMBLER.

The following is from the *Columbian Star*, published at Washington City:

"Dr. SCOTT.—This eminent clergyman in the former part of his life, was exceedingly fond of cards. *Ill success*, however, on one occasion, checked his propensity to gaming, and he lost all relish for the diversion. After he had assumed the clerical character, he never omitted worship in his family at the proper hours, and usually proposed it in his visits. He occasionally joined after this in a game of cards, fearing that too great preciseness might prejudice his neighbors. He was of the opinion that there was no harm in the practice though it seemed a frivolous method of spending time. 'I felt,' says he, 'that it was a very awkward transition to remove the card table, and introduce the bible and family worship.'"

More than ten times the amount of money has been paid for this man's "Family Bible" in the United States than in Great Britain, in proportion to the wealth of the two countries. "But Scott left off gambling and other sins before he died," says one of his admirers. Granted, but does it follow that his dull and expensive commentaries should exclude all other books from our shelves merely because he was not quite so immoral as other English clergymen? Some of our deluded countrymen have purchased this book, who could neither pay their debts nor provide food for their families.—*ibid.*

PIOUS ZEAL.—A clerical gentleman accidentally left his psalm book on the table of an acquaintance in the town of — in Cayuga county. The mistress of the house was a pupil of the Rev. Mr. Wilson of the Witness—or in other words a reformed presbyterian. On learning that the volume before her was from the pen of the heretical Dr. Watts, this pious dame was afraid to touch it with naked hands. She took the tongs and, seizing the unfortunate book, carried it carefully out of doors! * * * * If this poor woman merits our pity—what do her spiritual teachers & masters deserve?—*ibid.*

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